

Message Text

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FOR EA/ PRCM

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SUBJECT: DEP SEC: VISIT SOUTH ASIA

REF: STATE 51636

FOLLOWING MATERIAL REGARDING CURRENT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN PRC IS SUBMITTED FOR POSSIBLE INCORPORATION INTO BRIEFING BOOK FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY AS REQUESTED REFTEL:

CHINA' S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. TRENDS IN CHINA' S FOREIGN POLICY WHICH BEGAN TO EMERGE AS FAR BACK AS 1969 CAME INTO FULL BLOOM IN 1972. THE MAJOR DYNAMICS IN THIS PROCESS HAVE BEEN THE CHANGE IN CHINA' S PERCEPTION OF THE PRIORITY OF OUTSIDE THREATS AND SHIFTING INTER- RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHINA, THE UNITED STATES, JAPAN, AND THE USSR. AS CHINA HAS SOUGHT TO MAXIMIZE SUPPORT AND SYMPATHY FOR ITSELF WHEREVER POSSIBLE, MAJOR CHANGES HAVE ALSO OCCURRED IN ITS POLICIES TOWARD EUROPE, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, AND THE THIRD WORLD.

2. HAVING ATTAINED UN MEMBERSHIP, SET IN MOTION A SOLUTION TO THE TAIWAN PROBLEM, AND DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE US AND JAPAN, THE MAIN CONSIDERATION IN MOST OF CHINA' S FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS IS NOW THE PERCEIVED THREAT FROM THE
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SOVIET UNION AND THE POLITICAL RIVALRY WITH MOSCOW. LAST YEAR THE PRIMACY OF THE SOVIET THREAT WAS MADE EXPLICIT.

3. A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE HAS OCCURRED IN CHINA'S VIEW OF JAPAN. PEKING NOW TAKES A RELATIVELY BENIGN VIEW OF US- JAPANESE RELATIONS, INCLUDING THE MUTUAL SECURITY TREATY, OF THE JAPANESE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, AND OF JAPAN'S ROLE IN ASIA. THIS IS

DUE NOT ONLY TO THE NORMALIZATION OF SINO- JAPANESE TIES, BUT ALSO TO SINO- US DETENTE AND CHINA'S PREOCCUPATION WITH COUNTERING SOVIET POWER MOVES.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF BETTER SINO- US RELATIONS HAS PROCEEDED RAPIDLY SINCE THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE OF A YEAR AGO. WITH THE CONCLUSION IN FEBRUARY OF THE VIETNAM SETTLEMENT, THE MOMENTUM HAS ACCELERATED. THE BILATERAL ESTABLISHMENT OF LIAISON OFFICES IN PEKING AND WASHINGTON NOW PROMISES TO FURTHER FACILITATE GREATER POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND EXPANDED ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONTACTS.

5. IN HAILING THE PARIS ACCORDS, CHINESE LEADERS HAVE STRESSED THAT US MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT AND US ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF VIETNAMESE UNITY HAVE CREATED THE CONDITIONS FOR A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE VIETNAM PROBLEM. PEKING, HOWEVER, HAS NOT INDICATED THAT IT FORESEES A SHORT- TERM TIMETABLE FOR POLITICAL PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH. ON THE CONTRARY, PEKING APPEARS SKEPTICAL THAT SAIGON WILL AGREE TO POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNIST SIDE. THE CHINESE APPEAR TO FAVOR SIMILAR SETTLEMENTS IN CAMBODIA AND LAOS.

6. PEKING PROBABLY EXPECTS THAT NOW THAT THE WAR IS ENDED THE US WILL BEGIN TO REDUCE ITS FORCES ON TAIWAN. DURING THE PAST YEAR, THE CHINESE HAVE GIVEN THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY HAVE ADOPTED A LONG- TERM AND CONCILIATORY POLICY IN REGARD TO THE EVENTUAL "LIBERATION" OF TAIWAN. PUBLICLY AS WELL AS PRIVATELY THE PRC HAS PROPOSED TO THE GRC BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND CONTACTS. IN FEBRUARY, PEKING ACCELERATED ITS POLITICAL REUNIFICATION CAMPAIGN TOWARDS TAIWAN, STRESSING THE APPEAL OF NATIONALISTIC TIES AND PROMISES OF GOOD TREATMENT, THE FUTILITY OF RELYING ON OTHER COUNTRIES AND THE INEVITABILITY OF UNIFICATION BECAUSE OF THE "TREND OF THE TIMES."

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PEKING ALSO CLAIMED, WITH OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE SOVIET UNION, THAT THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE WOULD NOT PERMIT ANY THIRD PARTY INTERVENTION IN TAIWAN, REFLECTING PEKING'S LONG- STANDING CONCERN OVER SOVIET INTENTIONS TOWARD TAIWAN AND DISTRUST OF CHIANG CHIN- KUO.

7. BECAUSE OF SINO- US DETENTE, WITH THE RELATED UNDERSTANDING ON TAIWAN, AS WELL AS THE INTENSIFYING SINO- SOVIET CONFRONTATION, PEKING NO LONGER VIEWS US MILITARY POSITIONS IN ASIA AS NECESSARILY POSING A THREAT TO CHINA. THE CHINESE APPEAR TO FAVOR THE GRADUAL WITHDRAWAL OF US MILITARY FORCES AND BASES FROM ASIA BUT NOT IN A WAY WHICH MIGHT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SOVIETS.

8. THE CHINESE HAVE COME TO SEE WESTERN EUROPE, LIKE JAPAN, AS A FORCE WHICH CAN REDUCE SOVIET MANEUVERABILITY VIS- A- VIS CHINA AND RESTRAIN THE RELATIVE GROWTH OF SOVIET WORLD POWER. PEKING HAS BEEN CONCERNED THAT DETENTE IN EUROPE WOULD FREE SOVIET HANDS TO DEAL WITH CHINA AND HAS SOUGHT TO SCARE EUROPEANS OFF DETENTE BY WARNING THAT THIS MIGHT LEAD TO " FINLANDIZATION" OF WESTERN EUROPE. AT THE SAME TIME, CHINA HAS ABANDONED ITS PREVIOUS POLARIZATION POLICY WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CAMP. INSTEAD, IT IS CONCENTRATING ON A POLICY OF ATOMIZATION, ENCOURAGING NATIONALIST TENDENCIES WITHIN THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES AND PROMOTING RESISTANCE TO SOVIET DOMINANCE.

9. CHINA IS ALSO FOLLOWING A FLEXIBLE POLICY WITHIN THE THIRD WORLD, CONCENTRATING ON NATIONALISM RATHER THAN REVOLUTION, AND EXPLOITING CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS BETWEEN THE NON- SUPERPOWERS AND THE SUPERPOWERS, AND BETWEEN THE POOR AND THE RICH. PEKING CONDUCTS A GENEROUS AID PROGRAM FOR THE THIRD WORLD AND, WITH SOME SUCCESS, HAS PUT ITSELF FORWARD AS A LEADING ADVOCATE OF THE UNDER-DEVELOPED WORLD ON SUCH ISSUES AS MARITIME RESOURCES, TERRITORIAL SEAS, AND TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY POLICIES. HOWEVER, ON OTHER ISSUES LIKE DISARMEMENT, NUCLEAR TESTING, BANGLADESH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS, PEKING HAS FOUND ITSELF ON OPPOSITE SIDES FROM THE MAJORITY OF THE THIRD WORLD.

10. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, PEKING SEEMS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH COMPETING WITH THE OTHER POWERS FOR INFLUENCE ON THE STATE LEVEL. THE PRC DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE EITHER THE INTENTION OR THE CAPABILITY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE OF DOMINATING SOUTHEAST ASIA. IT HAS REITERATED A NON- INTERFERENCE POLICY IN REGARD TO OVERSEAS CHINESE AND MOVED TO ELIMINATE ITS PREVIOUSLY OPEN
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SUPPORT FOR THE IDENTIFICATION WITH INSURGENTS IN THE AREA. CHINESE CLANDESTINE MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR INSURGENTS REMAINS A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN BURMA AND TO A LESSER EXTENT IN THAILAND.

11. IN SOUTH ASIA, THE PRC IS CONCERNED TO COUNTER WHAT IT SEES AS SOVIET POWER MOVES AGAINST CHINA. THUS, PEKING APPEARS TO DESIRE A STABLE SETTLEMENT OF THE PAK- INDIA- BANGLADESH DISPUTE, BUT NOT ONE NEGOTIATED UNDER SOVIET AUSPICES OR ONE WHICH UNDERSCORES CHINA' S SETBACK IN THE AREA. PEKING APPARENTLY SEEKS TO PROMOTE SOME CONCESSION ON THE POW ISSUE TO MAKE ITS RECONCILIATION WITH BANGLADESH AND EVENTUALLY INDIA SEEM LESS A PIECE OF HUMBLE PIE.

12. THE PRC APPEARS TO BE SEEKING A GENERAL RELAXATION OF TENSIONS IN ASIA FROM KOREA TO IRAN. SUCH A GENERAL DETENTE IS APPARENTLY SEEN BY THE PRESENT CHINESE LEADERS AS FURTHERING CHINA' S SECURITY, MAXIMIZING ITS DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE, COUNTERING SOVIET EFFORTS TO ISOLATE THE PRC, AND ALLOWING CONCENTRATION ON

INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA.

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